 more transport layers transferring fluid from the fluid-distribution layer at least into the part of the fluid-storage layer located in the front and/or rear region of the absorbent article.--

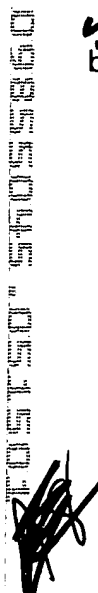
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In the Claims

Kindly cancel Claims 1-35 without prejudice and with right of reentry into this or any other appropriate application.

Please add the following new claims:

36. An absorbent article having a front area and a rear area, and a central area between the front and rear areas, said absorbent article comprising:

-  36.1
- (a) a liquid-permeable layer, which is turned toward a body of a wearer during use of the absorbent article;
 - (b) a liquid-impermeable layer, which is turned away from such body of such wearer during use of the absorbent article;
 - (c) a liquid distribution layer disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and the liquid-impermeable layer, and extending between the front area and the rear area, said liquid distribution layer comprising at least one web of sheet material, said at least one web of sheet material having openings therein formed after fabrication of the respective web of sheet material; and
 - (d) a liquid storage layer between the liquid-impermeable layer and the liquid distribution layer, said liquid distribution layer transferring fluid to at least part of the liquid storage layer located in one or both the front area and the rear area of the absorbent article.

Sub C2 37. An absorbent article as in Claim 36, said openings in said at least one web of sheet material being mechanically-formed openings.

Sub B2 38. An absorbent article as in Claim 36 wherein the liquid distribution layer selectively facilitates transfer of fluid into one or both the front area and the rear area of the absorbent article.

39. An absorbent article as in Claim 36, the liquid distribution layer comprising undulations arranged so as to form transport channels extending along a longitudinal direction of said absorbent article.

40. An absorbent article as in Claim 36 wherein the liquid distribution layer comprises an undulating strip of material, connected to said at least one sheet which bears the openings.

41. An absorbent article as in Claim 39 wherein the undulating strip of material is sufficiently pigmented that such pigment prevents visible discernment of the liquid storage layer.

42. An absorbent article as in Claim 36 wherein said at least one web comprises an UCTAD material.

Sub C4 43. An absorbent article as in Claim 36, said liquid storage layer extending from the central area into the front area and the rear area, the liquid storage layer having a higher liquid retention capacity in one or both the front area and the rear area than in the central area.

44. An absorbent article as in Claim 36, said liquid distribution layer transferring fluid to at least part of the liquid storage layer at areas of the liquid distribution layer and of the liquid storage layer, which are brought into contact with one another via compression.

45. An absorbent article as in Claim 44 wherein the areas which are brought into contact with one another via compression are arranged in a point-like manner.

46. An absorbent article as in Claim 36 wherein the liquid distribution layer is in contact with the liquid storage layer via hydrophilic adhesive.

47. An absorbent article as in Claim 46 wherein the liquid distribution layer and the liquid storage layer are connected by the adhesive in a point-like manner.

48. An absorbent article as in Claim 36 wherein the openings in the liquid distribution layer comprise funnel-shaped openings for transferring fluid, such funnel-shaped openings tapering inwardly toward the liquid storage layer.

49. An absorbent article having a front area and a rear area, and a central area between the front and rear areas, said absorbent article comprising:

- (a) a liquid-permeable layer disposed toward a body of a user during use of the absorbent article;
- (b) a liquid-impermeable layer disposed away from such body of such user during use of the absorbent article;

- (c) a liquid distribution layer, which comprises discrete passages therethrough, said discrete passages promoting movement of liquid toward the liquid-impermeable layer, said liquid distribution layer being disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and the liquid-impermeable layer; and
- (d) a liquid storage layer disposed between the liquid-impermeable layer and the liquid distribution layer, said liquid distribution layer transferring fluid to at least part of the liquid storage layer of the absorbent article.

Sub G 50. An absorbent article as in Claim 49, said liquid distribution layer comprising an undulating strip of material and an additional strip of material, wherein said passages are arranged in edges of the additional strip of material, said edges being folded inward such that said edges are located underneath the undulating strip of material.

51. An absorbent article as in Claim 50 wherein said edges run in a longitudinal direction of the absorbent article, and are folded over a central portion of the additional strip of material such that the passages taper inwardly toward the liquid storage layer.

52. An absorbent article as in Claim 50, wherein undulations of said undulating strip of material define fluid transport channels extending in a longitudinal direction of said absorbent article.

Sub B4 53. An absorbent article as in Claim 50 wherein the additional strip of material comprises an UCTAD material.

sub 84 54. An absorbent article as in Claim 49, the liquid storage layer extending from the front area to the rear area of said absorbent article, the liquid storage layer having a higher liquid retention capacity in at least one of the front area and the rear area of the absorbent article, than in the central area.

55. An absorbent article as in Claim 49 wherein areas of the liquid distribution layer and areas of the liquid storage layer are in contact with one another via compression, thereby facilitating transfer of liquid.

56. An absorbent article as in Claim 49 wherein the passages of the liquid distribution layer define openings for transferring liquid, such passages tapering inwardly toward the liquid storage layer.

sub 89 57. An absorbent article as in Claim 49 wherein the passages have feet at tapering ends thereof, said feet being in contact with the liquid storage layer.

58. An absorbent article as in Claim 49, the passages of the liquid distribution layer being disposed exclusively in one or both of the front area and the rear area of the absorbent article.

59. An absorbent article as in Claim 49 wherein the absorbent article comprises a woman's sanitary pad or a woman's hygiene inlay.

sub 10 60. An absorbent article as in Claim 50 wherein the undulating strip of material contains a colorant such as a dye.

61. An absorbent article having a front area, a rear area, and a central area between the front area and the rear area, said absorbent article comprising:

- (a) a liquid-permeable layer disposed toward a body of a wearer during use of the absorbent article;
- (b) a liquid-impermeable layer disposed away from the body of such wearer during use of the absorbent article;
- (c) a liquid distribution layer, which promotes movement of liquid toward the liquid-impermeable layer, said liquid distribution layer being disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and the liquid-impermeable layer; and
- (d) a liquid storage layer disposed between the liquid-impermeable layer and the liquid distribution layer,

said liquid distribution layer comprising areas having passages defining openings for transferring liquid, such passages having feet at the tapering ends thereof, said feet being in exclusive contact with the liquid storage layer and forming areas of separation between the liquid distribution layer and the liquid storage layer, whereby said areas of separation attenuate reverse wicking of liquid from the liquid storage to the liquid distribution layer.

62. An absorbent article having a front area, a rear area, and a central area arranged between the front area and the rear area, said absorbent article comprising:

- (a) a liquid-permeable layer disposed toward a body of a wearer during use of the absorbent article;
- (b) a liquid-impermeable layer disposed away from such body of such wearer during use of the absorbent article;

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- (c) a liquid distribution layer disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and the liquid-impermeable layer, said liquid distribution layer including at least first and second take-away layers each having funnel-shaped openings defining discrete passages therethrough which promote movement of liquid away from the liquid-permeable layer; and
- (d) a liquid storage layer disposed between the liquid-impermeable layer and the liquid distribution layer, wherein respective openings of said first take-away layer and said second take-away layer of said liquid distribution layer are spaced laterally from each other, thus preventing a direct, straight-line path for reverse wicking of fluid, whereby spacing of respective openings of said first take-away layer and said second take-away layer of said liquid distribution layer contributes to the prevention of liquid being transferred back from the liquid storage layer to the liquid distribution layer.

63. An absorbent article as in Claim 62, said liquid distribution layer further comprising an uppermost layer disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and said take-away layers, said uppermost layer being void of any funnel-shaped openings.

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C11 64. An absorbent article as in Claim 63, said liquid distribution layer further comprising an undulating strip of material disposed between the liquid-permeable layer and said uppermost layer, said undulating strip of material containing colorant, such as dye.

65. An absorbent article as in Claim 62, a first respective portion of each said funnel-shaped opening closest to the liquid-permeable layer being wider than a second respective portion of each said funnel-shaped opening most remote from the liquid-permeable layer, thereby forcing X-Y-direction travel as well as Z-direction travel of any potential reverse wicking liquid.